

In the claims:

For the Examiner's convenience, all pending claims are presented below with changes shown in accordance with the mandatory amendment format.

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method comprising:
distributing a device driver that is compiled to execute functionality under command from a kernel, wherein the device driver includes code defining functionality application programming interfaces (APIs) the device driver uses to execute the functionality associated with the device driver and excludes ~~a header, wherein the header~~ information including includes unique symbols associated with the kernel and version identification data of the kernel and kernel symbols associated with the version identification data; and
providing distributing the device driver to a computer via an installation package, the device driver to which, when run on a computer, dynamically create[[s]] the header information for the device driver by obtaining the version identification data and the associated unique kernel symbols from the kernel when installed on the computer.
2. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the kernel is part of an operating system, ~~wherein the kernel~~ and is identifiable by the version identification data.
3. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of ~~Claim~~ claim 2, ~~in which~~ wherein the operating system is selected from the group including a Linux operating system and a UNIX operating system.

4. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of ~~Claim~~ claim 3, wherein ~~in which the~~ provided device driver executes ~~an the~~ application program interface (APIs [D]) when they are exported from the kernel.

5. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of ~~Claim~~ claim 3, further comprising compiling the device driver into an object file prior to the distribution of the device driver.

6. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of ~~Claim~~ claim 5, further comprising obtaining the version identification data from the operating system and generating a version object file that includes the version identification data.

7. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of ~~Claim~~ claim 6, wherein the providing further comprises ~~[[ing]]~~ linking the version object file and the device driver.

8. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of ~~Claim~~ claim 7, further comprising obtaining a kernel specific address of a module list associated with the APIs and passing the address to the device driver.

9. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of ~~Claim~~ claim 2, ~~in which~~ wherein the device driver is at least one of a printer driver, a serial port device driver, an ethernet device driver, and a disk drive device driver.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture ~~computer program product~~ including a ~~medium~~ machine-readable medium ~~by a computer~~, the machine-readable medium carrying

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instructions which, when executed by a machine ~~the computer~~, cause the machine ~~computer~~ to:

distributing a device driver that is compiled to execute functionality under command from a kernel, wherein the device driver includes code defining functionality application programming interfaces (APIs) ~~the device driver uses to execute the functionality~~ associated with the device driver and excludes ~~a header, wherein the header~~ information including ~~includes unique symbols associated with the kernel and~~ version identification data of the kernel and kernel symbols associated with the version identification data; and

providing ~~distributing~~ the device driver to a computer via an installation package, the device driver to which, when run on a computer, dynamically create[[s]] the header information for the device driver by obtaining the version identification data and the associated ~~unique kernel~~ symbols from the kernel when installed on the computer.

12. (Currently Amended) The ~~product~~ article of manufacture of ~~Claim claim~~ 11, in which wherein the kernel is part of an operating system, ~~wherein the kernel being and is~~ identifiable by the version identification data.

13. (Currently Amended) The ~~product~~ article of manufacture of ~~Claim claim~~ 12, in which wherein the kernel is selected from the group including a Linux operating system and a UNIX operating system.

14. (Currently Amended) The ~~product~~ article of manufacture of ~~Claim claim~~ 13, in which wherein ~~the functionality included in the provided device driver~~ executes at least one of the APIs ~~application program interface (API)~~ when the APIs are exported from the kernel.

15. (Currently Amended) The ~~product~~ article of manufacture of ~~Claim claim~~ 14, further comprising obtaining the version identification data from the operating system and generating a version object file that includes the version identification data.
16. (Canceled)
17. (Currently Amended) The ~~product~~ article of manufacture of ~~Claim claim~~ 15, further comprising obtaining a kernel specific address of a module list associated with the APIs and passing the address to the device driver.
18. (Currently Amended) The ~~product~~ article of manufacture of ~~Claim claim~~ 17, ~~in which~~ wherein the device driver retrieves a module list export head from the module list and imports the ~~required application program interfaces (APIs[I])~~ while ignoring the version identification data.
19. (Currently Amended) The ~~product~~ article of manufacture of ~~Claim claim~~ 13, ~~in which~~ wherein the device driver is dynamically loaded in a Linux kernel.
20. (Currently Amended) The ~~product~~ article of manufacture of ~~Claim claim~~ 11, ~~in which~~ as wherein the installation module forms part of the device driver.
- 21-25. (Canceled)